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"I pledge myself to this house and to this country, to shew, that the waste and profligacy, that attends "places and pensions and abuse of various public officers are so great as to be sufficient to maintain with "bread all the labouring poor of this country. I do not speak hastily and at random; I have information "to proceed upon; for I have been in a situation, in which I had an opportunity of examining into these "matters."——MR. SHERIDAN'S Speech, 13th March, 1797.

TO THE

FREE AND INDEPENDENT ELECTORS

OF THE

CITY AND LIBERTIES OF WESTMINSTER.

LETTER XI.

GENTLEMEN,

The two topics, which, from want of room, I left untouched upon in the last letter that I had the honour to address to you, namely, the manner in which the people are considered and treated in the changes of the several ministries, and the great and general cause of these struggles, so manifestly hostile to the interests, the tranquillity, and the honour of our country; upon these two topics I shall not now need to address you much in the way of reasoning, seeing that the debates, which have since taken place in the House of Commons, will, when merely analysed, afford you a *practical proof* of what it would have been my object to establish by argument.

But, before we proceed to this analysis, it seems necessary to observe, that the EXPLANATION, which was, with so much previous pomposity, given by Lord Howick, in the House of Commons, on the 26th of last month, differs in no material circumstance, from the statement of the case, as given in my last letter. It appears, 1st, that the bill in question, was before the House of Commons, where it had been received with great applause, and had been read a first time; 2nd, that the king expressed to the ministers his disapprobation of it; the ministers immediately consented to *withdraw it*, without, observe, seeming to think the consent of the House of Commons at all an object of solicitude; 3d, that they made a minute of council, however, in these words:—"That "they trusted that his Majesty would see "the indispensible necessity of their expressing, on withdrawing the Bill, the "strong persuasion they felt of the benefits "which would result from a different source "of policy to the Catholics of Ireland; and "they further stated, that it was indispensible to their characters, that they should "openly avow these sentiments, not only "on the present occasion, but in the event "of the Catholic Petition coming forward: "and they further insisted, that the present "deference to his Majesty might not be understood as restraining them from submitting *for his Majesty's decision*, from "time to time, such measures as circumstances might require respecting the state "of Ireland;" 4th, that, upon perceiving this minute, the king not only dissented from it, but required of the ministers, that they should withdraw the latter part of it, and even substitute in its place a written obligation of a directly opposite nature, pledging themselves never to bring forward again the measure they had abandoned, nay more, never to propose, even to the king himself, any thing connected with the Catholic question; and, 5th, that, upon refusing to enter into this written obligation, the ministers were dismissed, and others, as we have seen, appointed in their stead. This is the fair state of the case, agreed upon by all parties. There is, indeed, a little dispute, as to whether the king was, beforehand, fully and circumstantially apprized of the whole extent of the measure, or whether a part of the tendency of the bill was not perceived by him previous to its introduction; but, of whatever importance this circumstance may be to those who attempt to reconcile with the spirit of our constitution the practice of originating bills under the express authority of the crown, and of withdrawing them under the same authority; of whatever importance this circumstance may be to such persons, it can, Gentlemen, be of no importance at all to us. These ministers we now find not ashamed openly to avow, that they proposed and brought in a bill, to which they first thought it their duty to obtain the king's consent; and that, the moment they perceived a change in the mind of the king with respect to it, they agreed to withdraw the bill from the House of Com-

mons; and, this avowal they are not afraid to make in that very House of Commons, where, that the thing may be complete, they are heard with applause! Observe, too, that they complain most bitterly of having been *misrepresented*, and the gentle Lord Howick talks of newspaper *libellers*. But, what is this misrepresentation? Some one, no matter who, publishes their famous minute of council, leaving out the words which I have marked by Italick characters; so that, from this publication, it might have been understood, that they reserved to themselves "the "right of submitting, *for the decision of* "*parliament*, such measures as circumstan- "ces might, from time to time, require, "respecting the state of Ireland" No, say they; no such thing; we did not attempt to reserve to ourselves any such right. All we attempted to do was, to reserve a right to submit such measures for *the decision of the king*. The newspaper libellers have represented us as having put upon record an assertion that we retained some small part of our rights as members of parliament; but their representations are false and malicious; for we were still willing not to stir an inch in proposing any act of parliament, without the previous decision of the king in its favour. These wicked "newspaper libellers" never think of accusing the ministers of any thing but of not going far enough in obeying the will of the king and in causing the parliament to obey that will; and all that these patriotic Whig ministers appear to be anxious about is, to convince the nation, and especially the House of Commons, that, as to all practical purposes, they went as far in this way as it was possible for any body to go, and that, therefore, it was extremely unjust to turn them out of their places; and this, Gentlemen, is the ground, upon which they mean, it seems, to appeal to the parliament against their successors in office!——But, let us take a little more in detail, the facts and doctrines contained in Lord Howick's explanation. He tells the parliament, 1st, that the opinions of himself and his colleagues, respecting the Catholics of Ireland, had been, at the time when they came into power, recently manifested in their speeches and their votes, which opinions no one of them could be expected to give up for the sake of office and emolument; 2nd, that they stood pledged to the measures for the relief of the Catholics; 3rd, that, in addition to the general reasons of justice and of policy, they were induced to bring forward the bill in question, from *a conviction that it was necessary to tranquillize and conciliate the people of Ireland, in which discontents and disturbances notoriously prevailed*; 4th, that, though the bill was agreed upon in the cabinet before the ministers heard of the coming Catholic petition, yet, that the knowledge of that petition being in agitation, operated as an additional inducement to the ministers to press forward the bill, hoping that, if promptly passed, it might induce the Catholics to abandon the object they were pursuing, a motive, which was not overlooked by me, in my last letter, page 488; 5th, that finding the king resolutely bent against the bill, they immediately agreed to withdraw it; and, 6th, that this was, on their part, a painful *sacrifice* of personal feeling *to public duty!*——Of personal feeling to public duty! What! was the giving up of this measure, which they were "convinced was necessary to tranquillize "and conciliate the people of Ireland, in "which discontents and disturbances noto- "riously prevailed;" was the abandoning of such a measure, under such circumstances, a sacrifice of personal feeling to public duty? No; my Lord Howick, you may assert this as long as you please, and you may find a crowd of base place-hunting people (at your Whig Club or elsewhere) to swear to the truth of what you say; but, be assured, that every man of a just mind, uncorrupted by views of place or emolument, will say, that it was a sacrifice of public duty to personal feeling, to views of emolument and of low ambition. You may make professions of sacrifices; but the nation has grown weary of your professions. You trust, you tell us, that, "whenever *that kind* of sacri- "fice becomes necessary, no man will be "found more ready to submit to it than you "will." I believe you with all my soul! But, believe that you would yield one guinea of emolument, or one rag of official pride, for the sake of your country, I do not.—— But, gentlemen, it is Lord Howick's doctrine, relative to the introducing of bills into parliament by order, or, at least, under the authority, of the king, that I wish to turn your particular attention to. This lord found it necessary to say something in explanation of this part of the transaction; he had perceived, that men were struck with the wide difference between the theory of the constitution, relative to checks and balances, and the practice of it, as so strikingly exemplified upon this occasion; and, he seemed very desirous to reconcile the theory with this practice. The best way is, first to put upon record his words, as reported in the Morning Chronicle, and then to make our remarks upon them.——"It has been "stated," said he, "by some persons, who

" have animadverted upon this transaction, " that ministers were not warranted in " bringing forward a public measure with- " out previously obtaining the consent of " his majesty. But this extravagant propo- " sition scarcely deserves serious notice. " According to any rational view of the " subject, the duty of a minister appears to " be *two-fold*. He may act in a double ca- " pacity upon different occasions; namely, " as a minister, and as an individual mem- " ber of parliament. There was no minis- " ter who had not acted so occasionally. If, " indeed, it were culpable to pursue the " course, some extravagant writers now " maintain, Mr. Pitt's conduct upon the " Slave Trade and Parliamentary Reform, " would have been highly censurable; for " *that distinguished statesman*, in both these " instances, brought forward the proposi- " tions as an individual member of parlia- " ment. The constitutional distinction, " which, in concurrence with my col- " leagues, I take between the duty of a " minister in the one case and the other, " is this; that when a minister brings for- " ward any motion *as a measure of govern- " ment* which has undergone any discussion " in the Cabinet, he violates his duty, *un- " less such measure shall have received the " sanction of that authority*. I should, of " course, feel myself very culpable, if I " attempted to bring forward any measures " in parliament as a ministerial measure " *unless I had previously submitted that " measure to the consideration of the king, " and obtained his majesty's consent to its " adoption*. It was therefore I laid before " his majesty all the particulars with regard " to the measure respecting the Catholics, " and waited to obtain his majesty's appro- " bation before I attempted to submit the " consideration of that measure to this " house."——Here we have the modern creed of the Whig politicians. What does the English constitution, or the law of parliament, know of any *two-fold* capacity of the members of the House of Commons? According to that constitution, those members are the guardians of the property and the liberties of the people; and they are nothing else. But, now we learn; now, for the very first time since the parliament of England began to exist, the House of Commons are flatly and plainly told, that there is another body, namely, the Cabinet Council, who discuss bills, and resolve upon adopting them, before they are presented to that House, before *leave* is given to bring them in! One of their own members rises in his place, and plainly tells them, that he has recently brought in a bill because the king wished him to do it, and that he has since *with drawn* that bill because the king changed his mind, and for no other reason whatever, though he was, at the same time, firmly convinced, that the passing of the bill was necessary to tranquillize and conciliate a fourth part of the people of the kingdom! Nay, he does not stop here; but goes on to say, that, unless he had obtained the king's approbation for bringing in the bill, he should have regarded it as an act *highly culpable* to have brought it in!——Thank him, however, for his frankness. We might, perhaps, have presumed, before, that such really was the case; but now it is openly avowed, that bills, before leave be moved for to bring them in, are discussed and resolved upon in the cabinet, that is to say, amongst men who are the king's servants during pleasure, and that they receive the sanction of their master, before they are proposed to the parliament.—— What pretty stuff has Blackstone and Paley and that foreign sycophant De Lolme been writing about the checks and balances in that wonderful effect of human wisdom, called the English constitution!——As to the distinction between bills brought forward *as measures of the cabinet* and bills originating with persons as *individual members of parliament*, what does the constitution know of such distinction? Does any writer upon our constitution make such a distinction? Does Blackstone, who has given us a commentary, upon the whole of our laws, talk of any such distinction? Has he once named such a thing as a *Cabinet?* Can the parliament recognize the existence of any such council, or body of men? Is not such a body utterly unknown to our laws? Besides, let us ask a little, what bills there are, of any consequence, which are *not* measures of the cabinet, if we admit of this distinction? All bills relating to the army; all bills relating to the navy; all bills relating to the church; all bills relating to the colonies; all bills relating to foreign connections and subsidies; all bills relating to loans and taxes, not only in the principle but also in the amount; in short, I am sure no one will pretend to deny, that every bill, in which the people are generally interested, must, according to this distinction, be regarded *as a measure of the cabinet*; and, therefore, if to all such bills, the king's consent, *previously* obtained, be an indispensible requisite, again I call upon Blackstone and Paley to come forth from the grave, vindicate their writings, and tell, if they can,

of what use is aHouse of Commons, except that of amusing the unthinking mass of the people with the idea that they are represented, and that the laws, by which they are taxed and bound, are made with their own consent Yes, Mr. Blackstone, you, who, through four mortal volumes, which, piled upon one another might supply the place of a stool, have rung the changes upon the blessings arising from the checks and balances of the English constitution, do rise and tell us, where, if Lord Howick's doctrine be sound, or if the parliament be content to act upon it, or, rather, to be passive under it, we are to look for those inestimable checks and balances? It is the peculiar business of the House of Commons to frame and to pass bills for the raising of money upon the people; and, when they pass any bill, for the placing of the public money at the disposal of the crown, it is called a *grant*. Now, as all these bills, without one exception, are what Lord Howick terms *measures of the cabinet*, what a farce, if his doctrine were sound, would this *granting* work be? According to this doctrine, it is resolved in the cabinet to bring in a bill for granting the king money; the king has the bill submitted to him, and directs it to be brought in; the Secretary to the Treasury brings it in; it is passed without a division; and *this*, this, Gentlemen, my Lord Howick would tell us, is the true "*practice* of the constitution in "this free country," where, as Blackstone says, the people, by their representatives, *tax themselves!*

Having taken sufficient time to congratulate ourselves upon the inestimable blessings which must naturally flow from this doctrine of the Whigs, let us, next, take a view of their conduct, as exhibited in the debates of the 24th and 25th of last month, taking those debates, as they stand reported in the Morning Chronicle news-paper, and commenting upon them as a news-paper publication.——On Tuesday, the 24th, the king had chosen his new "confidential servants," and, amongst them, was Mr. Perceval, who was appointed *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, and was, it was understood, to be immediately appointed what is called *Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster for* LIFE. This last place, like the places held by Lord Grenville, the Marquis of Buckingham, Mr. Thomas Grenville, and many others, is a mere sinecure, worth about 4,000l. a year, and having attached to it a good deal of church patronage. It has sometimes been granted for life before, and was so granted to the greedy Whig patriot, Mr. Dunning, by a ministry of which Lord Rockingham was the head. But, generally, it has not been so granted. It has, according to the "*practice* of the constitution," been a good decent reward for some one able to give pretty efficient support to the ministry of the day. But, Lord Howick and his public spirited colleagues, seeing it going for a *man's life*, and that man, too, not above four and forty, and withal very sober, abstemious, and moral, in his way of living; seeing it thus going, with respect to them, for ever and ever; seeing this part of their prey, not only snatched from them for the present, but about to be devoured by anticipation, they seem to have been inspired with an unusual degree of Whiggism, and to have resolved to preserve, if possible, the chance of again enjoying the profits of this fat sinecure. Accordingly, on the 24th, MR. PLOMER, member for Hertfordshire, (for, as I had occasion to observe lately, in such case, some man of this description always begins the discussion), having first stated what he had heard respecting the intended disposal of the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, said, that he begged leave to protest against the grantiug for life any place usually held during pleasure. SIR JOHN NEWPORT (a member of the late ministry) joined in this opinion, and he said something about places granted in *reversion*, which we will hear in his own words, because, though relating to no very rare instance, it is good to have it upon record, as something declared in the presence of our faithful representatives. A *reversion*, Gentlemen, is, we should recollect, the right of possessing a thing after the demise of the present possessor. If, for instance, an annuity of a hundred a year were settled upon me for life, and upon one of my children after me, for his life also; this annuity would be settled in reversion, and my child might, if any one would buy it of him, sell his reversionary right. Little did I imagine, when I was writing in America, that a traffic of this sort was carried on with respect to places of trust under that government, in the defence of which I made such exertions! But, away with these mortifying reflections! Let us hear the cheering voice of Sir John Newport. "With "respect to some of the Irish offices which "had been reported as proper, some to be "abolished, and some to be reformed, and "which *could not be touched* in either way, "on account of the interests of the *reversioners*; the office of *customer and collector of the port of Dublin*, one of "those reported as requiring regulation and "reform, had been *granted on reversion* "TWO DEEP, and consequently could

" not be touched by the late Bill for the re-
" trenchment, reform, and regulation of
" offices in Ireland, though it had twice
" fallen vacant within the year, and though
" it was one of those that most particularly
" required reform and regulation." A reversion "*two deep*," Gentlemen, exists in the case, where a thing is settled for life upon one person first, and, upon his death, is settled to descend to a second person, and, upon his death to a third person. This is the way, then, in which the place of a high Custom-House Officer is disposed of! And, yet, there are wretches so impudent and so infamous as to call Sir Francis Burdett a Jacobin and a Leveller because he complains of these things!——In proceeding with the debate, we find MR. GEORGE JOHNSTONE (of whom more by-and-by) " could not help observing, that those who
" had been most clamorous in cheering the
" reflections cast on the hon. and learned
" gentleman, were members of the family
" (the Grenvilles) which was *loaded with*
" *wealth derived from public sinecures.*
" He wished, with the hon. gentleman,
" that the resolution now before the house
" (against reversions) had been adopted long
" since, and then that family would not be
" drawing £60,000 a year from the public.
" He hoped the indications they now gave
" of a different disposition would be per-
" manent." This was a fine slap upon the other side; but, MR. HUSKISSON gave a better, because it came exactly in the right place. " As to the propriety of any *ar-*
" *rangements* with a view to *induce indivi-*
" *duals to accept of office*, he believed
" that the first measure of the administra-
" tion then in office, with a view to enable
" a noble lord (Grenville), for whom he
" felt a very sincere respect, was a suffi-
" cient proof *that such an arrangement was*
" *not very extraordinary.*" This was very well done. The tap was light as air; but it was like the end of the finger upon the tender part of the arm, or under the ear, and which is much more painful than a broom-stick laid across the shoulders. The thing he alluded to was this: Lord Grenville was Auditor of the Exchequer, a place worth 5 or 6 thousand pounds a year, and so completely a sinecure, that he had been, by act of parliament, relieved even from the trouble of signing his name. When, however, he was become prime minister and first Lord of the Treasury, it was discovered, that, as the law stood, it was illegal for the First Lord of the Treasury to be also the Auditor of the Exchequer; and, indeed, well it might be unlawful, the one office being a *check* upon the other. Yet, what was to be done? His Lordship had a mind to be First Lord of the Treasury, without having a mind to give up a life-certain place of such excellent revenue. Inclination said: " take both places at once;" but the law said; " you cannot." In this dilemma, recourse was had to the grand and infallible remedy, *an act of parliament*; and, it is the real truth, that the *very first measure* of the late reforming patriotic ministry, was, an act of parliament, to enable Lord Grenville to hold, at one and the same time, the two offices above-mentioned. " Was it not shocking?" said a firm friend of Mr. Fox's to me at the time, " was it not shocking to *begin* with a
" bill like this, and to make poor old Fox
" the instrument to bring it in?" It was shocking, indeed; and, you will, probably, remember, Gentlemen, that I lost no time in stating my opinion respecting it. I said, it would, one day or other, rise up in judgment against the ministers, and now it has so risen.——When the ministers have found themselves at a dead lift, as the vulgar phrase is, MR. WHITBREAD has generally stepped forward to assist them, not only with his readiness at speaking, but with the strength of his character for independence and purity; which character, however, is, by no means, what it used to be. Upon the present occasion he so stepped forward; with what degree of success we shall presently see. He said, " that the
" case adverted to by the hon. gentleman,
" and that alluded to by his hon. friend (Mr.
" PLOMER), were entirely different. The
" former case had been brought *under the*
" *consideration of the house*, the latter was
" to be by *the act of the crown*. The act
" that had been *discussed* in that house, was
" to enable a noble lord to hold a place,
" that had been granted to him for *past ser-*
" *vices*, and which he then held for life;
" but the case then under consideration,
" respected the grant of a place for life,
" which was *always heretofore granted*
" *during pleasure*, and *before any ser-*
" *vices* could be performed for which
" it was to be a reward." Now, as to the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster having *always* heretofore been granted only during pleasure, Mr. Whitbread was misinformed; and, as to the distinction between *past services* and *services to come*, there is nothing solid in it. Those services are most amply paid for *during their continuance*; and, all the world knows, that the *reward*, as Mr. Whitbread chooses to term it, is neither more nor less than money given

for the sake of enriching the receivers of it, without any reference at all to services, or else, I should be glad to know, upon what principle this very place was last given to the *Earl of Derby*. But, the other distinction is worthy of particular notice. This grant to Mr. Perceval was to be the *act of the crown*, whereas, says Mr. Whitbread, the grant to Lord Grenville was brought under the *consideration of this House*. Yes, Sir, and then take along with you Lord Howick's doctrine, that it is culpable in ministers to bring forward such a measure without thereupon *receiving the sanction of the king*; take this along with you, Sir, and then, in the language of a plain honest man, tell me, if you can, where is the *difference?* Ah, Sir! there was a time, when you would have scorned such miserable shifts; and I cannot help hoping, that there are yet moments when you lament that you have been drawn into a situation that compels you now to have recourse to them.——Mr. Whitbread, by way of recrimination, stated, that Mr. Perceval was already a *reversioner*. That a large sinecure place (a place it is worth nearly *ten thousand pounds a year*) was now enjoyed by *Lord Arden*, a brother of Mr. Perceval; that, upon this place there was a reversion "*two deep*," and that the second of the two was Mr. Perceval himself. This is very true, and not less notorious; and it is also true, that Mr. Perceval holds the sinecure of *Clerk of the Irons*, worth about one hundred pounds a year. But, still the Percevals are very far indeed behind the Grenvilles; and, one thing let us always bear in mind, that all these grants of which the late ministers complain, were made by that same Pitt, with the praises of whom they have been, and yet are, continually insulting this pauperized and bank-paper and tax-gatherer nation. Were it only for this they merit our execration. Mr. Windham has not praised him; but, he is the only man amongst them who has not. Mr. Whitbread has been conspicuous for it. It was a vile scheme for gaining over and securing the support of his old corrupt partizans; and, like all other schemes of the sort, it has, in the end, produced an effect precisely the contrary of that which it was intended to produce.—The last person, who spoke upon this occasion, was MR. PARNELL, who said: "A noble lord (lord "Castlereagh) who had carried the prac"tice of granting reversions to such an "extent in Ireland, was to have a high of"fice under the new arrangement, and he "had a suspicion that he might introduce "the same practice in England. He had "had the honour of a seat in the Irish Par"liament, during the whole of the proceed"ings on the Union. That measure had "been *lost in the first instance, because two* "*of the great interests remained neuter.* "Before 12 months had elapsed, the mea"sure was again brought forward, and car"ried by a majority of 30, on which occa"sion *both those interests voted for the mea*"*sure.* The *son* of the gentleman, who "was at the head of one of those interests, "at present, had the *reversion of the* "*Clerkship of the Pells*, in Ireland, and "the son of the other had *the promise of* "*the first bishopric that should fall* "*in after the Union.*" Upon this, Gentlemen, we will make no comment at all. We will content ourselves with merely calling to mind, that this union, and all its transactions, were the work of that Pitt, whom Lord Howick and Mr. Whitbread are now continually eulogizing, and whose debts they have caused us to pay. If we were to add any other reflections, they would naturally relate to the blessings of our invaluable constitution in *church* as well as in state, and particularly in those admirable *checks* and *balances*, upon which Blackstone and others have written such long chapters. ——Before the House broke up, a MR. MARTIN, who is, it seems, a "*learned* gentleman," and, of course, a *lawyer*, gave notice, that he would, the next day, make a motion, for an address to the king, beseeching him not to grant, for life, any place, usually granted during pleasure; which motion was avowedly pointed at the grant about to be made to Mr. Perceval, and which motion was made accordingly, and, upon a division, was carried by a majority of 93; there being for the motion 208, and against it 115.——But, to you Gentlemen, to you, as free, independent, and honest men of plain common sense, I particularly address myself, when I remark, that my Lord Howick, who, while in place, was ready to withdraw a bill which he was convinced was necessary to the tranquillity of the most vulnerable part of the kingdom; that my Lord Howick, who was ready to do this *while in place*, from his tender regard for the personal feelings of the king; this same Lord, *the moment he is out of place*, urges on, aids and abets with all his means, this motion of Mr. Martin, which must, if successful, *necessarily* produce extreme pain to those feelings. This Lord, who, while in place, had such high notions of the king's prerogative, that he would have regarded it as culpable in himself to introduce a bill without the king's approbation; steps forward, the moment he

is out of place, to obstruct that same king in the exercise of his undoubted constitutional prerogative of granting a place for life, which place had been more than once before been granted for life. He, good gentle lord, could see no harm in the king's having the power to cause, or to prevent, the originating of bills to become laws to bind all his subjects; but, the moment he finds him granting a lucrative place to a rival for power, and in such a way, too, as to preclude the hope of its ever coming into his own hands, that moment he takes alarm for the constitution! ——Mr. Martin having made his motion, "that an humble Address be presented to "his Majesty, praying that he would not "grant, in any other way than during plea-"sure, the office of Chancellor of the Du-"chy of Lancaster, or any other office not "usually held for life;" and, the motion having been seconded by Mr. Ward (not the famous pensioned *Robert Ward*), Mr. Perceval rose, and began by acknowledging, that, if he had not heard, that this motion was intended to be made, he should at this moment have been in possession of the much envied place, for life; that having heard of the intended motion, he had been to the king, and, for the present declined it; that, as to precedents, Mr. Dunning's was a case in point, and clearly proved, that the king was now proposed to be addressed not to do precisely that which a whig ministry, while in power, had prevailed on him to do: that the case of Lord Grenville was a still greater stretch of power in this way; and, that, whatever might be the decision of the House, and whether he had the place, or not, he was ready and willing, and was resolved to serve the king to the best of his abilities, if the king commanded his services. Having said this, he left the House. But, there was one fact, which Mr. Perceval brought out, relative to *reversions*. There are many places in the gift of the Lord Chancellor, and these also are frequently given in reversion. The late Lord Chancellor Erskine has, it would appear, given but one place in this way; and *to whom* do you think he gave it? *To whom*, Gentlemen, do you think that the liberty-loving, the abuse decrying, and the place-condemning Mr. Erskine, now "*Lord* Erskine," granted that one reversion? Why, to the person, who, for a great number of years, served himself, as clerk, in his private capacity of barrister! For such a person, Mr. Erskine must, upon retiring from the bar, have, for very decency, made some sort of provision; and, I suppose, his Lordship thought that this provision would be more honourable if it came from the public purse than if it had come from his own. We have to thank Mr. Perceval for this fact, Gentlemen; and, if he does nothing else than make exposures of this sort, he will do much more for the people of England than has been done by his predecessors, one of whose great objects appears to have been to *smother* every thing done by Pitt, with praises of whom, with encomiums on whose wisdom and virtues, they have daily insulted us. ——Lord Henry Petty, whose father was one of the ministers, when the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster was bestowed, for life, upon Mr. Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton, said, in answer to Mr. Perceval, upon that point, "that "personally alluded to as he had been by the "comments made by a right hon. gentleman "(Mr. Perceval) upon an appointment "sanctioned with the approbation of a no-"ble and near relative of his (lord Lans-"down), he could not help offering him-"self then to the house at once to retort "every sinister insinuation against his no-"ble relative and himself. He contended, "in the first instance, that between the case "of the right hon. gent. and that of lord "Ashburton, there was a great and leading "distinction; the latter was, in the tech-"nical phrase, a law lord, excluded from "the duties of that profession from which "he derived a great and valuable conside-"ration, and receiving the Chancellorship "of the Duchy of Lancaster, with the ex-"press understanding that he was to resign "it on the occurrence of that event which "would put into the hands of his Majesty "the disposal of the place of Chief Judge "of the King's Bench; such was the ho-"nourable ambition of a lawyer the most "eminent of his day. It was not then "granted, it was not held forward as a bait "to entice him to discharge the duties of an "office great and lucrative, (*loud and re-"peated cries of hear! hear!*) no! he "should say, in vindication of the noble "personage alluded to, that it had never "been offered to entice *future services, but "to reward past*; and in equal vindication "of the person who accepted it, he would "say, that great lawyer did not accept it as "a bargain, as a pitiful compromise to in-"demnify the apprehended consequences "of risking his support to any administra-"tion (*loud and repeated cries of hear! "hear!*)."—But, Gentlemen, let us not be hallood out of our reason. What are these distinctions? What do they amount to? First, we are told, that Mr. Dunning, was become a *Lord*, before the place

was bestowed upon him for life; but, we are not told, what was the fact, *that he would not accept of the peerage without the place*; and, observe, that the *bargain* was, that he was to be Lord Chief Justice if a vacancy happened, and that the place in question was only a sort of stay-stomach, till the full meal came to hand. But, Lord Henry Petty tells us (and upon this distinction he seems principally to rest), that the place was given to Mr. Dunning for *past services*, and not as an indemnification for the risk he might run in making part of a new ministry. The fact is, that Mr. Dunning had never rendered any public services at all; he had never been in the public service; he had spent his time, and had *exhausted his health*, in labouring for money, of which he was very fond, and of which he had amassed a great deal, as a private barrister; and, if the place was not given him as an indemnity for his risks in supporting the new administration of the day, I believe it would puzzle a more acute man than Lord Henry Petty to find out a reason for the gift. Mr. Dunning had been a great wrangler in parliament; he was the author of the famous resolution about the *increasing influence of the crown*, to which influence he in the right Whig way, added, as soon as he got into place; he had been a most useful party-man. What *services*, then, had he to make a claim for? What *past* services had he performed? And, then, if we must take private circumstances into view, he was very rich, and had, I believe, neither wife nor child, and, consequently, no temptation, other than that of sheer avarice, to take the place in question for any term at all, much less for life; whereas Mr. Perceval has a numerous family, dependent almost, if not altogether, upon his labours for becoming support and provision; and, therefore, though I condemn the grant in either case, and though, generally speaking, I have no partiality for Mr. Perceval, yet, I must declare, that the grant to him would have been much more proper than the grant to Mr. Dunning; and there is no clamour, excited by a popular cry, coming from those who have proved that the love of place is their predominant passion, that shall prevent me from saying, that, in every way in which a comparison can be drawn, Mr. Perceval is in my opinion the worthiest man of these two.——Mr. Sturges having represented Mr. Perceval as a barrister of the highest rank in point of professional emolument, and Mr. Sharp having denied the fact, Mr. *Montague* asserted that the fact was true, and, in continuation (after a cry of *order*), said, "that if a member did "not intend to be disorderly, whatever ex- "pressions might have fallen from him, that "member was not to be put down by "clamour *(a laugh)*. He addressed himself "to *the independent* members of that "house, and to their attention did he parti- "cularly address himself. Whereupon, the reporter informs us, that there was "again *a loud and general cry of order*, "*order, chair, chair,*" a cry, we may suppose, Gentlemen, that arose from the idea (a misconceived one, no doubt), that there were some members in the house that were *not quite independent*. The Speaker, however, with that coolness which so well comports with the dignity of our representatives, put the matter at rest by uttering the following words: "The hon. member will be pleased to re- "collect, that in the language of this house "*no such distinction* between its members is "recognised."——Mr. Montague proceeded, and said, "that the distinction he meant "was between those *seeking for places and* "*pensions*, and *those who were not candi-* "*dates for either*."——A distinction that many people make; but one that it may be very improper to make in the House of Commons.——Next, according to the report, followed Mr. George Johnstone, who, "with *great warmth*, expressed his un- "qualified disapprobation, of the entire "course pursued by the late administration, "and was inclined to think that the cabals "of men about power could serve only, like "those between Sir R. Walpole and Gene- "ral Stanhope, to *discover secrets* that would "make all *honest men disgusted with both* "*parties*."——This is false; I mean the *report*, or, rather, the former part of it; for if ever Mr. George Johnstone spoke with more warmth than Little Moses in the School for Scandal, I will be contented to suffer martyrdom for the sake of a Whig ministry. No; with anger the honourable Gentleman might speak; but with *warmth* never in his life. He derives his philosophy from a school, of which he is a most eminent disciple, and which is much too cooling in the nature of its precepts and its practice to encourage, or permit, the indulgence of warmth. As to the latter part of what this honourable man said, I must leave you, Gentlemen, whose honesty is unquestionable, to judge of its truth.——This censure of the late ministers, however, brought up Mr. Sheridan, who, as you will see, "*discovered a secret*" with respect to Mr. George Johnstone. He said, "that it was not the "first time he had observed in the hon. "gent. who had just sat down, an eagerness

" to attack the late administration and its " friends, though certainly the present, like " every former attempt, evinced rather an " avidity to attack than a power to be offen- " sive. He was glad, however, to see in " the present attack something like a phi- " losophical neutrality, and that as the late " administration had had the misfortune of " the hon. gentleman's opposition, so the " present would be now likely to come in " for its due share. The hon. gent. had " said a great deal about independence, and " had congratulated himself in an angry " tone upon his having no place under any " government. He (Mr. S) could only " say that he was no divulger of *private* " secrets; but he might make some allusion " to a certain public message, which it had " been deputed to him to deliver to a noble " friend of his, at the formation of a cer- " tain administration. He was sure the " hon. gent. perfectly understood him *(a* " *loud and general laugh)*. He was rather " inclined to believe, from the nature of " that message, that the hon gent. notwith- " standing his present acrimony, might " then have been entirely *dulcified* towards " that *terrible* administration he had been so " much of late in the habit of condemning " *(a laugh)*—Aye; and disinterestedly " condemning too; or dis*interest*edly, if such " pronunciation better suited the taste of the " hon. gent., whether classical or vulgar" ——Now, what in all the world could Mr. Sheridan mean by this pronunciation? For what could he make shift to lay particular stress upon the letters making up the word *interest?* What has Mr. George Johnstone to do with *interest?* I will certainly sift this out, if I submit to the cruel vexation of read- ing all the India Papers over again.——That Mr. George Johnstone had made overtures for a place, at the forming of the last ministry, was pretty certain, from what Mr. Sheri- dan said; and, therefore, when our old friend sat down, the former rose, and said, " that he neither had, nor would have ap- " plied to the right hon. gent. who had just " sat down for the purpose of procuring " him any appointment upon the occasion " alluded to, and for two reasons, the first, " that he knew if he had applied the right " hon. gent. *was too much engaged in pro-* " *viding for himself and his family*, to attend " to any agency for others; and secondly, " because if he had requested the right hon. " gent. to undertake the commission, he " was pretty sure that, although he might " promise, he would have been very apt to " forget it. Now, the fact was, upon the " case referred to by the right hon. gent. " simply no more than this. After stating " to the right hon. gent. the substance of " some conversations which he had had " with an illustrious person, now no more, " (Mr. Fox) he did communicate to that " right hon. gent. and authorise him to men- " tion *his readiness to accept of any office to* " *which no salary should be attached*, and " in which he might be able to make him- " self useful. He remembered that he par- " ticularly mentioned *Indian affairs*, from " his knowledge of which he stated to the " right hon. gent. his opinion that he should " be able to render *some service to the coun-* " *try* In offering to accept a situation in " the conduct of those affairs, without any " emolument for his services, he hoped he " was making a proposition which should " not expose him to censure, or to the sus- " picion of any unworthy motives."—— Mr. SHERIDAN rose again, and said what is well worthy of being remembered: " that " he was sorry to have felt himself under " the necessity of stating any thing which " might serve to fix an unworthy imputa- " tion upon the character or motives of any " hon. member. But he begged leave to " observe, that men were induced to seek " for offices from different views—some " for honour, others for profit, [others for " *patronage*,] and the disappointment of " the views in the one case might create as " much irritation and discontent as in the " other. With regard to the very active " agency which the hon. gent. imputed to " him in his attention to his own interest, " he would beg to state, of what nature that " agency was. Understanding that his il- " lustrious friend, who was now no more, " had mentioned, that in consideration *of* " *his services for 27 years*, for which he " had *received nothing whatever, something* " *permanent should be settled upon him;* " but that upon communicating this wish " to his colleagues, they expressed their de- " termination that nothing of the kind " should in any case be granted and again, he " immediately declared to his illustrious " friend, that upon no account should the " thing be any further agitated, but at once " dropped."——Now, Gentlemen, leaving Mr. George Johnstone's *disinterestedness* to pass for what it is worth, not forgetting, however, *the nature of his connections with India*; let us ask of what sort are those " *services*" *for twenty-seven years*, of which Mr. Sheridan speaks, as the foundation of his claim upon our purses, for a " *settle-* " *ment of something permanent.*" His ser- vices, like those of Mr. Dunning, were given to *a party*. Great services, indeed,

did he render in that way; but, are we to be called upon to pay life annuities to *members of parliament*, for their services in that capacity? This is fine doctrine indeed. But, *what place* was it that it was proposed, by Mr. Fox, to give him for life? He himself, you will readily be sworn, did not propose the thing to Mr. Fox. It was, of course, to be pressed upon him. The thing was to be done entirely without his knowledge; and yet, that being the case, it does seem odd, that Mr. Fox *should apologize to him for the failure.* However, let us suppose, that all this was so; but what was the place, that Mr. Fox proposed to give him for life? Why, Gentlemen, it was *this very Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster!* "By the mass," as Falstaff says, "he would have made a brave judge." And, to use his friend Weatherhead's phrase, what choice "*cushion-thumpers*" he would have furnished us with; for he would have had considerable *church-patronage!* If this statement be true, then, Mr. Fox recommended to be done for him precisely that which the king was about to do for Mr. Perceval. Whether church-benefices would not be as properly deposited in Mr. Perceval's as in Mr. Sheridan's hands is a question that I will not put to you; but, what a cruel satire is it upon the memory of Mr. Fox, to represent the bestowing of the thing in question as so flagrantly unconstitutional, at the very same time, that it is asserted, that Mr. Fox would, if he had been able, have bestowed it in exactly the same manner! The truth is, that the objection was not to the principle of the appointment, but to the *man*, whom the Grenvilles disliked, and whom the Foxites, with their accustomed meanness, would risk nothing to support. Mr. Sheridan has now the power of repaying them in their own coin. He is the only man amongst them, whom the change will not sink. Him it will raise. He has been eclipsed merely by the *power* of those, who owed so much to the former exertion of his talents. Now their power is gone, those talents will again have their worth; and, though he will not, perhaps, actually join the opponents of his supercilious and ungrateful party, he will not fail to make them *feel*, that he is not to be slighted with impunity. Whatever else he may be, he is a man of wonderful resources of mind; and, if he had been true to himself and to the people, he would never have had to sue for "a permanent settlement."

Having but little room remaining, I must be very brief in what I have to say with regard to interference with the king, *relating to the change of ministry.*—Gentlemen, it is the king's prerogative; a prerogative which he possesses, and which he ought to possess, to change his ministers, whensoever he pleases, and without being liable to be questioned, or taunted, respecting it, by any power upon earth. The House of Commons has its rights, too. It has the right to refuse to grant money; and this it can do at any time; but, it has no right to interfere with the king in the choosing, or dismissing, of his servants. It can take up, and pass the Catholic bill; it can refuse money; but, greedy turned-out ministers will never propose any such mode of proceeding; they will naturally desire the parliament to side with them upon *a question of place.* And, if the parliament were to side with them, were to adopt any measure, having for its object the forcing of them back upon the king, to what a degraded situation would it be reduced! They well know, that the House of Commons itself is armed with *constitutional* powers, quite sufficient to render it an effectual check upon the crown; but these powers such ministers never wish to see it exercise; because they know, that, in such exercise, it would break from their trammels; whereas their object is, to render it always subservient to their views of interest and of ambition; to use it against the people as long as they are in place, and against the king the moment they are out of place. But, if such a thing were attempted, in the present instance, it would be too glaringly scandalous for any man, except, perhaps, Mr. Perry, to defend, the House yet resounding, as it does, with the declaration of Lord Howick, that, while he was in place, a bill was brought into the House because the king approved of it, and was afterwards stopped in its progress and *withdrawn*, because the king changed his mind. What would that House be? In what light would it be considered by the country, or by the world, if immediately after this declaration, it was to join that same Lord Howick in a complaint against that same king for exercising his undoubted prerogative in dismissing those, whom it calls his *servants?* What an absurd, what a preposterous conclusion would this lead to! The House of Commons hears, without a single whisper of disapprobation, that a bill has been brought in, and afterwards withdrawn, by the sole authority of the king; and Mr. Perry has the impudence to tell us, that it is proper of this very same House of Commons to interfere with the king about the choosing of his own servants. "Aye," will he say, "but, you "perverse, hard-hearted dog, Lord Howick

" and I were in place in the first instance, " and now we are walking about arm-in-" arm" (this was really the case a few days ago) " with our eyes nailed to the pave-" ment, and with countenances as wise as " those of a couple of brief-less lawyers in " Westminster Hall, while the unfortunate " judges and jurors are stunned with the " bawling of their more successful bre-" thren."

Mr. Perry, hoping, probably, that something of the sort above spoken of will be attempted, has, in his newspaper of the 30th of last month, made an attempt to prove, that to dissolve the parliament *now* would be *unconstitutional*, though he has, at the same time, the unparalleled profligacy to defend the dissolution of 1784 and also that of last summer! His arguments, as he would call them, in support of this monstrous proposition I have neither time nor room to answer at present; which may, too, be rendered unnecessary, if, in the small space that I have left, I should be able to console Mr. Perry with the hope that a dissolution *need* not be attempted. It may not have occurred to Mr. Perry, in his bustle of giving dinners to cabinet and other ministers, that it is just possible, that Lords Sidmouth and Ellenborough, if not another or two lately high in office, may join the new ministers before parliament meets again. And, as to the members of the Houses of Parliament, does Mr. Perry think, that a long *prorogation*, with the time which it would give for men to cool and reflect, would not tend to mitigate their passions and their opinions? Does he think, that members of parliament are stocks and stones; and that the soft and melting powers of eloquence will have no effect upon them? One of the faults which Mr. Burke found with the French National Assembly was, that they were permanently sitting. Retiring now-and-then to converse with one another as private persons, he said, was a great means of enlightening our legislators. Well, then, does Mr. Perry (who *now* quotes Mr. Burke too) think, that, the many occasions, which, during a recess, will offer for conversation, will have no effect at all? If you would convince a man, and particularly a politician of a certain stamp, of his error, there is nothing like a private interview; politics being, in this respect, very nearly a kin to love, the arguments of which, when they approach to points of extreme delicacy, are never successfully discussed, never urged on to complete conviction, if there are more than two persons present. The cause of this I shall not presume to assign; but the fact will, I am persuaded, be denied by no man of common observation; and I am fully convinced, that a summer's recess would render a dissolution of parliament perfectly unnecessary, though I must, at the same time freely confess, that a dissolution, and, of course, a general election, would be a measure for which I should heartily thank the king and his advisers.

I remain,
Gentlemen,
Your faithful friend,
And obedient servant,
WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 2nd April, 1807.

ASSESSED TAX HARDSHIPS.

SIR,——I hired a lad the beginning of Jan. 1804, and paid for him the Midsummer and Michaelmas following £2. as the act directs. At the latter period he left me; so that he had been with me only three quarters of a year. In the year 1805, though I had no lad, I was surcharged by the inspector £4. for omitting to enter one. I could not wait on the commissioners at the distance of 8 miles, being an old man, and just recovered from a paralytic stroke.—I therefore made an affidavit of the circumstances, and directed my attorney to wait on them with it. They confirmed the surcharge, by the advice of the inspector, who has the one half for his vigilance and industry; and the attorney claimed £2. for the affidavit, horse-hire, and expenses.——Thus the whole expense of having a lad for *nine months* amounted to *eight pounds*, besides wages, clothes, and maintenance.——I am, Sir, your obedient servant,——EDWARD BALDWYNE, *Curate of Drayton Beauchamp, near Tring, Herts.*——P. S. I have several fruit trees, which no longer bear for want of a pruning knife, but am afraid to employ one, as in that case, I shall be charged for *a gardener*. Is not this a ble-sed country, where a man cannot have a plumb or a pear, in his own garden, for fear of an inspector?—*Jan. 26, 1807.*

" LEARNED LANGUAGES."

No. 17.

SIR,—I have the honour of transmitting you a copy of the Resolutions voted, *nemine contradicente*, at a Meeting of the Schoolmasters of Bucks and Berks, on Saturday last:—" Whereas it was asserted in the Po-" litical Register of the 14th of February, " 1807, that the teaching of the Latin and " Greek Languages to all persons who are " to become either Statesmen, Legislators, " Lawyers, Physicians, or Priests, is worse " than useless;—Resolved, 1st, That this

" assertion is very alarming.—2dly, That " if Mr. Cobbett proves this assertion, as " he certainly will, the boys at our respec- " tive schools will no longer mind what we " say to them.—3dly, That what is worse, " their friends will take them from school. " —4thly, That the inevitable consequence " of this will be that we must starve, being " incapacitated, from having either studied " or taught the Learned Languages all our " lives, from earning our bread in any " other way.—5thly, That a Copy of these " our Resolutions be transmitted to Mr. " Cobbett by the president, who is to re- " present our deplorable situation with " the most moving eloquence he is mas- " ter of."——Alas! Sir, it was with the greatest difficulty that I could compose these Resolutions; and I understand you do not understand Latin and Greek (in which most Learned Languages I flatter myself I write fluently and elegantly enough), so I hope you will excuse me from obeying the injunctions contained in the 5th Resolution; and I remain, Sir, with the greatest respect, &c.—Γυμνασιαρχης.

" LEARNED LANGUAGES."

No. 18.

SIR,——Feeling myself not quite satisfied with the manner in which your correspondents have hitherto treated the question respecting the Learned Languages, the interest I take in the subject induces me to trouble you with a few remarks; chiefly with the view of supplying some material omissions, as they appear to me, in the arguments of those who contend against the utility of classical learning as a part of general education. —If a plain uneducated man, of good understanding, were advised by a person of superior attainments, to have his son instructed in a particular branch of knowledge, his first inquiry, I presume, would be, " is it a thing that can be learnt in a reasonable time, and with ordinary abilities? Supposing my son possessed of the average capacity, and application of youths of his age, is there a sufficient probability of his making himself master of what you recommend to him, so as that his time, and my money shall not be thrown away?" Did this question relate to arithmetic, or book-keeping, or geography, or any of the *modern* languages, the person to whom it was addressed might answer boldly in the affirmative, and say there was no danger. But, if Latin and Greek were what was referred to, could the same answer be given by a conscientious man? In this case, I imagine, our man of learning would first make a considerable pause; and then would reply, " By no means! on the contrary, the chance is twenty to one against your son; for, upon an average, scarcely one in a score of the boys who are annually entered at our scools, ever acquires a competent knowledge of Latin alone, much less of Greek. And the proof is, that they are never able to read the works of any ancient author in such a way as to derive from them either instruction or entertainment." After this, can we suppose that either the one would ask any more questions, or the other press his advice any farther?—That such is the real state of the fact, I have not the least hesitation in affirming. I am even of opinion, that the proportion of good scholars; of such I mean as read the classics with facility, and take pleasure in the occupation; is less than is here supposed. The reason it is scarcely necessary to explain. The whole structure and analogy of the ancient languages are so different from those of the modern; the words of which they consist are so peculiar to themselves, and the collocation of these in sentences is so irregular and diversified, that to learn any one of them thoroughly is a work of much difficulty and labour, requiring not only a long period of docility for its accomplishment, but a portion likewise of the voluntary application of riper years. Except, however, in the case of boys who are intended for the learned professions, it is rarely compatible with the views of parents to allow a sufficient time for this. And the peculiar misfortune of the case is, that unless the process is thus completed, nothing in a manner has been done. The pupil is mortified to find, that, after all his sufferings both of mind and body, he is really as unable to read Latin as ever; for a sensible boy will never think it a matter of any consequence that he can hammer out a page or two, in as many hours, with the irksome aid of a perpetual recurrence to his dictionary.—I should not indeed be inclined to set a high value on the understanding of that person, who merely for the honour of the thing, can be content to envelope his mind in the mist and obscurity of a language with which he is but imperfectly acquainted, whilst a rapid succession of clear and vivid ideas is at his command in his native tongue. The knowledge of words which he has acquired is perhaps considerable; yet, being entirely of a preparatory kind, it soon fades from his recollection, for want of being put to its appropriate use. This is always the fate of imperfect studies, which, besides being useless for their specific purpose, are peculiarly liable to be forgotten; somewhat like unfinished buildings, which, at the same

time that they are unfit to be occupied as habitations, sooner fall into decay than entire edifices.—The inference from this statement I regard as inevitable; and, I think, Sir, it amounts to a complete justification of your original position, that the learned languages, as a "part of general education," are worse than useless. It is plain, that if the benefits to be derived from our acquaintance with them are confined to so small a number, it matters little to the argument how considerable these benefits may be in the particular instances. The acquirements of the single student who attains the object in view, may be a sufficient compensation for his own time and labour; but they cannot surely, in consistency with common sense, be considered as an equivalent for the time and labour of the nineteen others who fall short of it. To them the time spent in this study is a pure loss; and as they constitute a great majority, such also must it be regarded on the whole.—Here, I have no doubt, the advocates of classical literature will ask me, if I have never heard of the advantages to be derived even from an unsuccessful study of Latin, in the knowledge which it impresses of the principles of our own language. That this is in some degree the case, I am not inclined to dispute; the argument has an appearance of force when considered by itself, and thus it has misled many; but place it over against the reasons on the other side, and I apprehend it will have no more effect on the general question, than a single grain would have on a balance, when hundredweights were in the opposite scale. There is nothing relating to language in general, or to the English language in particular, which may not be learnt in one fiftieth part of the time necessary to acquire it in this manner, by a direct study of the thing itself; except indeed a little knowledge of etymology. How far the most docile period of youth is wisely laid out on this accomplishment, I shall let those determine who can estimate the value of both!—A material branch of the subject remains to be considered; but at present I can only bestow upon it a few words. By this system, it will be said, a complete education is at least secured for young men in the higher ranks of life, who are able to spare the time necessary for bringing their classical studies to perfection. That those who are born to the exercise of legislative functions, or are destined to fill important offices in the state, should be properly fitted for the parts which they will be called upon to act in society, is an object, undoubtedly, of the first national consequence. With reference to this class, there is a peculiar propriety in the definition which Milton has given of a "complete and generous education," as that "which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war." Let us, then, apply this definition as a test to ascertain the merits of the plan of instruction which is followed at our most celebrated schools, at Eton and Westminster for instance, where nothing else but Latin and Greek is taught, and even at the two Universities, where they continue to be still the primary objects of attention. Now, I apprehend it is the characteristical feature of this plan, that it cultivates exclusively the memory and the taste, both subordinate faculties of the mind. The principle of the new French system; a system dictated by necessity, and expressly adapted to the service of the state—is to exercise the understanding. From this system the learned languages are in a manuer excluded. Calculation and experiment, the sciences depending on reasoning and observation, are the subjects which at present occupy the attention of youth in France. Now, which of these two systems is best adapted to improve the general powers of the mind? to make men active, sagacious, and inventive? Which of them is calculated to form the best generals and statesmen? No one, I imagine, who reflects that it is superiority of judgment which governs all human affairs, can be at a loss for the proper answer to these questions. In what degree of estimation the study of Greek and Latin is held in this view, by those who are best qualified to judge of its effects, may be drawn from an expression made use of by the enlightened authors of "Practical Education," who, in their chapter on grammar, after stating the circumstances which may render a certain proficiency in these languages necessary or desirable, proceed to examine the question how this proficiency may be attained, with the least loss of time, and the *least danger to the understanding*.——CIVIS.——*March* 16, 1807.

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPERS.

CONTINENTAL WAR.—*Twenty-ninth Bulletin of the Grand French Army.*

(*Concluded from p.* 416).

Gen. Blucher, Prince Frederick of Brunswick Oels, and the other generals, then came forward to the victors, and desired to capitulate. The troops were defiled before the French army. These two days' work destroyed the last corps which remained of the Prussian army; beside the remainder of

the artillery, we have taken a number of standards, and 16,000 prisoners, of whom 4000 are cavalry.—Thus the Prussian generals, who, in the delirium of their vanity, indulged in all sorts of sarcasms against the Austrian commanders, have the fourth time renewed a catastrophe similar to that of Ulm; 1st, in the capitulation of Erfurt; 2d, by that of the Prince Hohenlohe; 3d, in the reduction of Stettin; and the 4th, in the recent capitulation of Schwartau. The city of Lubeck has suffered considerably: taken by assault, its streets, its squares, have been scenes of carnage. These calamities she attributes to those who drew the perils of war towards her walls.—Mecklenburg has been equally ravaged by the French and Prussian armies. A great number of troops traversing it in various directions, of necessity subsisted at the expense of the country. This state is in close alliance with Prussia, and will in some measure prove an example to those princes of Germany who seek for alliance with a far distant power, which is perfectly safe from a participation in these evils it draws upon them, and which makes no effort to support those who are attached to it by the nearest ties of blood, or by the closest diplomatic relations.——Dery, an aide-de-camp of the Grand Duke's, obliged a corps to capitulate which escorted a considerable quantity of baggage, and had got beyond the Peene. The Swedes had paid the fugitives for the covered waggons. This affair produced 1500 prisoners, and a great quantity of baggage and carriages. Some of the regiments of cavalry have gained, in specie and booty, to the amount of several hundred thousand crowns.—Marshal Ney, who was charged with the siege of Magdeburg, bombarded that town. A number of houses were burned, which caused the inhabitants to murmur greatly; upon which the commandant desired to capitulate. A great number of cannon were found in the fortress; extensive magazines; 15,000 men drafted from more than 70 battalions, and military chests of several regiments.—— During these important operations, several corps of our army arrived on the Vistula. The Warsaw mail brought many letters from Russia, which of course were intercepted. From these we perceive, that the fabrications of the English Journals meet with much credit in Russia. For instance; that Marshal Massena has been killed; that the city of Naples was taken and occupied by the Calabrians; that the King fled to Rome; and that the English, with 5 or 6000 men, were masters of Italy! However, a little reflection would enable them to discover the fallacy of these reports. Has not France increased, not diminished, her military force in Italy? The King of Naples is in his capital; he has 30,000 French troops at his back; he is master of the Two Calabrias, while at Petersburgh they imagine the Calabrians are at Rome! If a few galleys, armed and trained by the infamous Sidney Smith, the most worthless among the brave English soldiers, killed unprotected individuals, and massacred wealthy, unoffending, and peaceable proprietors; the gendarmerie and the scaffold has done them justice! The English navy disavows not in the least the epithet of infamous, bestowed upon Sidney Smith. Generals Stuart and Fox, and all the officers of the army, are indignant at beholding the English name associated with such brigands! The brave Gen. Stuart has even publicly protested against these outrages, as unavailing with respect to their objects as they are atrocious in themselves, and which tend to exchange the noble science and business of war for a system of robbery and assassination! But when Sidney Smith was selected to execute the sanguinary suggestions of the Queen, we can only perceive in him one of those unprincipled instruments, which governments do often employ, but whom they always abandon to that contempt, which they are the first to feel for them! The Neapolitans will one day be informed in detail, of the letters circulated by Sidney Smith, the commissions he has authorized, and of the money he has expended for the execution of atrocities, in which he is himself the chief agent.—We also see, by the letters from Petersburgh, and even in the official dispatches, that they imagine there are no French in Upper Italy. Those persons, however, ought to be informed, that independent of the army of Naples, there are more than 100,000 French troops in Italy, ready to punish those who should dare to attack it. They expect also every day at Petersburgh to hear of the successes of the division of Corfu; but, they will shortly learn, that this division had scarcely landed at the Mouths of the Cattaro, when they were defeated by Gen. Marmont, that a part of them have been captured, and the remainder reimbarked and fled. It is a very different thing to fight against French, from what it is to engage with the Turks, whom they hold in fear and partial subjection, by artfully fomenting discord and insurrections in the provinces. Respecting these, however, the Russians are not a loss for means to shift the opprobrium from themselves.——It is declared, by a decree of the senate, that at Austerlitz, it was not the Russians, but their

allies, who were beaten; and should a new battle of Austerlitz take place upon the Vistula, it will even then be others than the Russians who shall be conquered! Although now, as then, their allies had not a sufficient number of troops to form a junction with theirs! The plan of the movements, and that of the march of the Russian army, have fallen into our hands. From these, it is evident, that nothing can be more ridiculous than the plan of operations of the Russians, except their vain hopes of success!—Gen. Legrange has been declared Governors General of Cassel, and the territories of Hesse. ——Marshal Mortier, with the troops under his command, is on his march for Hanover and for Hamburgh.—The King of Holland has blockaded Hameln.—It is necessary that the present war should be the last, and that its authors should be severely punished, in order that those who may hereafter take up arms against the French people, should be well aware of the peril of such undertaking, and of its inevitable consequences.

Thirtieth Bulletin of the Grand French Army.

Berlin, Nov. 10, 1806.——The fortified town of Magdeburgh has surrendered on the 8th. On the 9th, the gates were occupied by the French troops. The capitulation is hereunto annexed.—Sixteen thousand men, nearly 800 pieces of cannon, and magazines of every kind, are in our hands.—Prince Jerome has laid Glogau, the capital of Upper Silesia, under blockade, by Brigadier-Gen. Lefebvre, at the head of 2000 Bavarian horse.—The town was bombarded on the 8th by ten howitzers, fired by the light artillery-men. The prince passed an eulogium on the conduct of the Bavarian cavalry. General Deroy invested Glogau with his division on the 9th. A parley has been opened for its surrender.—Marshal Davoust entered Posen with a corps of the army on the 10th. He is highly satisfied with the spirit that animates the Poles. The persons who hold situations under the Prussian government would have been massacred, had not the French army taken them under its protection.—The vans of four Russian columns, each 15,000 men strong, had begun to enter the Prussian states by Georgeenburg. Olita, Grodno, and Jalowka. On the 25th of October, these advanced guards of colums had made a two days marches, when they received news of the battle of the 14th, and of the consequent events. They retrograded immediately. So many successes, and events of such high importance, should not slacken the military preparations in France. They should, on the contrary, be followed up with fresh energy, not to satisfy an insatiable ambition, but to fix bounds to the ambition of our enemies.——The French army will not quit either Poland or Berlin, until the Porte shall have been in the full extent of its independence, nor until Wallachia and Moldavia shall have been declared to belong in complete sovereignty to the Porte.—The French army will not quit Berlin, until the possessions and colonies, both Spanish and Dutch and French, shall have been given up, and a general peace made.

Thirty-first Bulletin of the Grand French Army.

Berlin, Nov. 12, 1806.—On the 11th instant, at eleven in the moruing, the garrison of Magdeburgh filed off, in presence of the division of the army under the command of Marshal Ney. We have captured 20 generals, 800 officers, and 22,000 soldiers, among whom are 200 artillery-men, with 54 pair of colours, five standards, 800 pieces of artillery, one million pounds of powder, a great assemblage of pontoons, and an immense quantity of metal for the casting of cannon.——Colonel Gerard and Adjutant Commandant Richard presented to the Emperor this morning, in the name of the first and fourth corps, sixty pair of colours taken from the Prussian corps under General Blucher, at Lubeck. There were amongst them 22 standards. Four thousand horses, completely mounted, which were seized near Lubeck, are on their way to the depot at Potzdam.——In the 29th Bulletin it was stated, that the corps under General Blucher put us in possession of 12,000 prisoners, including 5000 cavalry. This was a mistake: there were 21,000 made prisoners, including 5000 cavalry, completely mounted. Thus, in consequence of these two capitulations, we have obtained 120 pair of colours and standards, and 43,000 prisoners.—The total of prisoners made since the commencement of the campaign, exceeds 140,000; and that of the colours taken, 250. The number of pieces of artillery taken from the enemy in the field of battle, and in the affairs with detachments, exceeds 800; and that of those found in Berlin and the surrendered fortresses, 4000.—The Emperor yesterday reviewed his horse and foot guards in a plain in front of Berlin. The weather was very fine.—— General Savary has entered Rostock with his moveable column. He found there from forty to fifty Swedish ships in ballast, which he immediately put up to sale.

Thirty-second Bulletin of the Grand French Army.

Berlin, Nov. 16, 1806.—After the taking of Magdeburgh, and the battle of Lubeck, the campaign against Prussia is entirely finished.—The following was the situation of the Prussian army upon taking the field:—The corps of General Blucher, called of Westphalia, consisted of 35 battalions of infantry, 4 companies of rangers, 45 squadrons of cavalry, one battalion of artillery, and 7 batteries, independent of the regiment pieces.——The corps of Prince Hohenlohe consisted of 24 Prussian battalions and 25 Saxon battalions, 45 Prussian squadrons, and 36 Saxon squadrons, two battalions of artillery, eight Prussian batteries, and eight Saxon batteries.—The army, commanded by the king in person, consisted of an advanced guard of 10 battalions and 15 squadrons, commanded by the Duke of Weimar, and three divisions. The first, commanded by the Prince of Orange, consisted of 11 battalions and 20 squadrons. The second division, commanded by General Wartensleben, consisted of 11 battalions and 15 squadrons. —The 3d division, commanded by General Schmettau, consisted of ten battalions and fifteen squadrons. The corps of reserve of this army, which Kalkreuth commanded, consisted of two divisions, each of ten battalions of the regiments of the guards or of the *elite*, and 20 squadrons.—The reserve, commanded by Prince Eugene of Wirtemberg, consisted of 18 battalions and 20 squadrons. —Thus the total general, of the Prussian army, consisted of 160 battalions; and 236 squadrons served 50 batteries, which made present under arms 115,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, and 800 pieces of cannon, comprising the cannons of battalions.—All this army was at the battle of the 14th, except the corps of the Duke of Weimar, which was still at Eisenach, and the reserve of the Prince of Wirtemberg, which carries the Prussian forces, that were at the battle, to 126,000 men —Of these 126,000 men, not one has escaped. Of the corps of the Duke of Weimar, not a man has escaped. Of the corps of reserve of the Duke of Wirtemberg, which was beat at Halle, not a man has escaped —Thus these 145,000 men have all been taken, wounded, or killed. All the colours and standards, all the cannons, all the baggage, all the generals have been taken, and nothing has crossed the Oder. The King, Queen, Gen. Kalkreuth, and about ten or twelve officers, are all that have fled. The King of Prussia has now remaining a regiment in the town of Gros Glogau, which is besieged, one at Breslau, one at Brieg, two at Warsaw, and a few regiments at Koenigsberg, in all about 15,000 infantry and 3 or 4000 cavalry. Part of these troops are shut up in strong places. The King cannot assemble at Koenigsberg, whither he is at this moment fled, more than 8000 men.—The Sovereign of Saxony has made a present of his portrait to Gen. Lemarois, Governor of Wirtemberg, who, being at Torgau, re-established order in a house of correction, among 600 convicts, who had armed themselves, and threatened to plunder the town. —Gen. Lebrun presented yesterday to the Emperor four standards, belonging to four Prussian squadrons commanded by Gen. Pelet, and which Gen. Drouet forced to capitulate near Lauenburgh. They had escaped the corps of Gen. Blucher.——The corps of the Prince of Ponte-Corvo, and Marshal Soult, are on their way to Berlin. The corps of Marshal Soult will arrive there the 20th, that of the Prince of Ponte-Corvo a few days after.——Marshal Mortier, is arrived, with the eighth corps, at Hamburgh, to close the Elbe and the Weser.—Gen. Savary has been charged to blockade Hameln with the Dutch division.——The corps of Marshal Lannes is at Thorn.—The corps of Marshal Augereau is at Bremberg and opposite Graudentz —The corps of Marshal Davoust is on its march from Posen towards Warsaw, whither the Grand Duke of Berg is repairing with the other part of the reserve of cavalry, consisting of the division of dragoons of Generals Beamont, Klein and Beker, the division of cuirassiers of Gen. Nansouty, and the light cavalry of Gen. Milhaud.—Prince Jerome, with the corps of the allies, is besieging Gros Glogau; his siege equipage was formed at Custrin. One of the divisions is investing Breslau. He is taking possession of Silesia.—Our troops occupy the fort of Lenczyc, half way between Posen and Warsaw. Magazines and artillery have been found there. The Poles show the best disposition; but as far as the Vistula this country is difficult, it is very sandy. It is the first time that the Vistula sees the Gallic Eagle.——The Emperor desired that the King of Holland should return to his kingdom, to defend it in person.—The King of Holland has caused the corps of Marshal Mortier to take possession of Hanover. The Prussian Eagles and the Electoral Arms were taken down together.

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